

Message Text

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ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 AID-20 IO-13 AGR-20 SS-15 NSC-10

CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 TRSE-00 OMB-01 EB-11

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAGR, NI

SUBJECT: DROUGHT IN NIGERIA

BEGIN SUMMARY: LARGE AREA OF NORTHERN NIGERIA AFFECTED BY DROUGHT WHICH IS GRIPPING MOST OF AFRICAN SAHEL. FMG ACKNOWLEDGES "CONCERN" AT SITUATION BUT APPEARS DETERMINED HANDLE PROBLEM ITSELF AND CONFIDENT IT CAN DO SO. END SUMMARY

1. AS PREVIOUSLY REPORTED BY AGRICULTURAL ATTACHE (TOFAS 39 AND 41), LARGE AREA OF NORTHERN NIGERIA ABOVE TWELFTH PARALLEL IS SUFFERING FROM DROUGHT WHICH EXTENDS ACROSS MOST OF WEST AFRICAN SAHEL. PART OF AFFECTED AREA STILL WITHOUT RAIN, WHILE RAINFALL WHICH NOW OCCURRING THROUGHOUT MOST OF REGION BEGAN TWO TO FOUR WEEKS LATER THAN USUAL. LATENESS OF PLANTING MEANS THAT CROPS WILL BE DOWN EVEN IF RAINS CONTINUE TO NORMAL MID-SEPTEMBER TERMINAL DATE, WHILE EARLY END OF RAIN COULD CUT PRODUCTION SEVERELY IN THIS NORTHERN BELT.

2. IMMEDIATE EFFECTS OF DROUGHT HAVE INCLUDED (A) DRYING UP OF MANY PASTURE LANDS WHICH, COMBINED WITH SCARCITY AND HIGH PRICES OF ANIMAL FEED, HAS LED TO DEATH OF

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REPORTED 300,000 HEAD OF CATTLE; (B) MOVEMENT OF PART OF

RURAL POPULATION INTO LARGER VILLAGES AND CITIES, INCLUDING APPARENTLY SUBSTANTIAL CROSS-BORDER MOVEMENT OF HERDSMEN FROM NIGER AND CHAD WHERE DROUGHT IS EVEN MORE SEVERE (LARGE NUMBERS OF WHOSE CATTLE INCLUDED IN LOSS FIGURE CITED ABOVE); AND (C) WIDESPREAD DEMANDS, EXTENSIVELY REPORTED IN PRESS, FOR FMG ACTION BOTH IN ALLEVIATING IMMEDIATE DROUGHT EFFECTS AND IN SUPPORTING LONGER-TERM AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT AIMED AT PREVENTING RECURRENCE OF PRESENT SITUATION. IN ADDITION, AREA SUFFERING FROM SHORTAGE OF GRAINS FOR BOTH HUMAN AND ANIMAL CONSUMPTION AS RESULT LAST YEAR'S DROUGHT AND RESULTANT DEPLETION OF STOCKS, WITH CONSEQUENT SHARP PRICE INCREASES.

3. FMG ROLE THUS FAR HAS BEEN LARGELY LIMITED TO MAKING AVAILABLE FUNDS AND SUBSIDIZED GRAINS TO FOUR STATE GOVERNMENTS IN DROUGHT AREA (NORTHERN-WESTERN, NORTH-CENTRAL, KANO, AND NORTH-EASTERN) AND TO PROMISING INCREASED ASSISTANCE FOR SUCH LONGER-TERM MEASURES AS WELL-DRILLING AND IMPROVEMENTS IN ANIMAL HUSBANDRY. INITIAL FMG PLAN TO PURCHASE GRAIN ON WORLD MARKET SHELVED IN FAVOR OF DIRECT GRANT OF \$15 MILLION TO STATE GOVERNMENTS (AT THEIR REQUEST) FOR DROUGHT RELIEF PROGRAMS. STATE GOVERNMENTS IN TURN HAVE SUPPLEMENTED THIS WITH ADDITIONAL FUNDS FROM OWN BUDGETS. RELIEF OPERATIONS HAVE BEEN HANDLED AT STATE LEVEL, WITH EACH OF FOUR STATE GOVERNMENTS MAKING OWN ARRANGEMENTS FOR PURCHASE AND DISTRIBUTION OF SUPPLIES.

4. SENIOR FMG OFFICIALS AND FAO REPRESENTATIVES HAVE TOLD US SITUATION IN NORTHER NIGERIA WARRANTS "CONCERN" BUT BOTH FEEL IT PRESENTLY CAN BE HANDLED BY FMG WITHOUT OUTSIDE ASSISTANCE. IN FMG'S VIEW, DROUGHT IS RECURRING PROBLEM WITH WHICH NIGERIA HAS COPEDED SUCCESSFULLY IN PAST AND CAN HANDLE AGAIN, THOUGH IT HOPES TO FIND LONG-TERM SOLUTION IN SUCH PROGRAMS AS NATIONAL ACCELERATED FOOD PRODUCTION.

5. AREA AFFECTED CONTAINS APPROXIMATELY FOUR MILLION PEOPLE, OR ABOUT SIX PERCENT OF TOTAL NIGERIAN POPULATION, THAT IT HAS BEEN POSSIBLE TO MEET NEEDS THUS FAR (OTHER THAN ANIMAL FEEDS) FROM RESOURCES AVAILABLE WITHIN NIGERIA. IF LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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RAINS NOW HOLD UNTIL MID-SEPTEMBER, GRAIN CROP SHOULD BE SUFFICIENT TO MEET NEEDS THROUGH NEXT SUMMER'S GROWING SEASON WITH ONLY SLIGHT RISE IN IMPORT REQUIREMENTS. (AGATT SUBMITTING UPDATED PRODUCTION ESTIMATE IN NEXT FEW DAYS.) USAID FOOD AND AGRICULTURE OFFICER CURRENTLY TOURING AFFECTED AREAS AND EXPECTS PREPARE FIRST-HAND REPORT ON RETURN.

6. COMMENT: FMG APPEARS CONFIDENT IT CAN HANDLE DROUGHT RELIEF OPERATIONS WITHOUT OUTSIDE ASSISTANCE. BARRING SUDDEN END TO RAINFALL, IMPORT REQUIREMENTS LIKELY REMAIN WITHIN NORMAL LIMITS AND BE MET THROUGH COMMERCIAL CHANNELS. EVEN SHOULD RAINS END EARLY AND SUBSTANTIAL INCREASE IN IMPORTS BE NEEDED, WE WOULD EXPECT FMG SEEK SUCH ADDITIONAL QUANTITIES THROUGH COMMERCIAL CHANNELS TO MAXIMUM EXTENT POSSIBLE. IN SUM, FMG SEEMS DETERMINED TAKE CARE OF ITS IMMEDIATE DROUGHT PROBLEM ON ITS OWN, AND PRESENTLY APPEARS ABLE TO DO SO.

DECON 8/1/74
REINHARDT

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